

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the application is requested in view of the above amendments and the following remarks. New claim 29 has been added and substantially tracks the limitation of current claim 20. No new matter has been added. Claims 20-27 and 29 remain pending in the application.

Applicant's representative Joshua Randall (Reg. No. 50,719) conducted a phone interview with Examiner Blair Johnson on August 18, 2003, in which the cited references were discussed in detail and the Examiner agreed to withdraw the obviousness rejection of claims 20-27 based on Dunn (U.S. 4,893,667) in view of Watanabe (U.S. 5,791,390). However, after further review of the Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement submitted by the Applicant on June 3, 2003, the Examiner suggested that DE 19537190 A1 would render obvious claims 20-27, and requested that Applicant address this reference as a 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) obviousness rejection in response to the current Office Action. Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

DE '190 discloses a vertical blind 10 having an upper face that transmits light to a greater extent than the lower face of the blinds. As shown in Figure 2 of DE '190, the direct sunlight cannot reach a person sitting at a workspace, such as a desk near the window, because the sunlight at the lower face of the blinds is substantially blocked. However, the sunlight is able to pass through the upper face of the blinds.

The blind disclosed by DE '190 is not only designed to block sun light at the lower face, but is also intended to eliminate visibility through the lower face thereby providing a security function such that those outside of the workspace cannot look in. This feature of the lower face makes the blind 10 particularly useful for an establishment such as a bank or office to prevent persons walking by outside from seeing what is happening inside the workspace.

DE '190 provides no disclosure or suggestion of switching the light transmissivity properties of the blind so as to have the arrangement of claim 20; that is, "the first face transmits substantially no light and the second face subdues incident light ... , the first face being located above the second face." Furthermore, DE '190 fails to disclose or suggest the possibility of having the second face "subdue incident light in such a manner that a person present at his workspace in an inner space provided with the blind can still look outside through the second

face," as required by claim 20. Reversing the light transmissivity properties of the blind disclosed by DE '190 would completely contradict the purpose and function of the blind disclosed by DE '190. Therefore, DE '190 not only fails to disclose or suggest the light transmissivity and visibility properties required by claim 20, but actually teaches away from such a configuration.

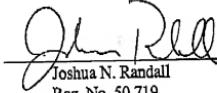
In view of the above, Applicants submits that one skilled in the art, when referring to the DE '190 reference, would not have arrived at a configuration having the limitations of claims 20-27. Reconsideration and allowance of claims 20-27 is respectfully requested.

New claim 29 has been added and includes substantially the same limitations as claim 20, but rewritten in a different format. Applicant submits that claim 29 is allowable for at least the same reasons stated above related to claim 20, and requests consideration of allowance of new claim 29.

In view of the above, Applicant requests reconsideration of the application in the form of a Notice of Allowance. If a phone conference would be helpful in resolving any issues related to this matter, please contact Applicants attorney listed below at 612.371.5265.

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